

AN 3
HONEST MAN
THE
BEST O' MEN,

A FAVOURITE NEW SONG,
BY THE
CELEBRATED
ROBERT BURNS,

To which is added,
THE CHARACTER
OF
A GOOD WIFE DELINEATED,
IN AN EPISTLE TO A FRIEND,

BY THE HONOURABLE
LORD GARDENSTONE.

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AN
H O N E S T M A N
THE
B E S T O' M E N.

A FAVOURITE NEW SONG.

I.

W H A T though on hamely fare we dine,
Wear hodden grey, and a' that;
Gie fools their filk, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' that.

II.

For a' that, and a' that,
Their tinsel shew, and a' that;
An honest man, though ne'er sae poor,
Is chief o' men for a' that.

III.

Wha wad for honest poverty
Hing down his head, and a' that;
The coward slave we pass him by
And dare be poor for that.

IV.

For a' that, and a' that,
 Their purse-proud looks, and a' that;
 In ragged coats ye'll aften fin'
 The noblest hearts for a' that.

V.

Ye see yon birkie, ca'd a lord,
 Wha struts and stares, and a' that,
 Though hundreds worship at his word,
 He's but a cuif for a' that.

VI.

For a' that, and a' that,
 His ribband, star, and a' that;
 A man of independent mind,
 Can look, and laugh at a' that.

VII.

The king can make a belted knight,
 A marquis, duke, and a' that,
 But an honest man's aboon his might,
 Guid faith, he manna fa' that!

VIII.

For a' that, and a' that,
 His dignities, and a' that;
 The pith o' sense, and pride o' worth,
 Are grander far than a' that.

IX.

Then let us pray, that come it may,
 As come it shall, for a' that;
 'That sense and worth, o'er a' the earth,
 Shall bear the gree, and a' that;

X.

For a' that, and a' that;
 Its coming yet, for a' that;
 Wha' man, and man, the world o'er,
 Shall brothers be, and a' that.

THE
C H A R A C T E R

OF A

GOOD WIFE DELINEATED.

A WIFE, you say, is an expensive toy,
 But, wanting cost, we cannot purchase joy;
 The richest miser must remain in rags,
 Unless he condescends to loose his bags;
 The thread-bare bard, a coach who cannot hire,
 Is fain to straddle through December's mire;

And he, whose income won't extend to port,
To the more frugal ale-house must resort.

Before a doctor takes the pains to kill,
His patient's purse must pay for every pill:
A British Premier too must bribe the *bourse*,
Before they'll vote his Majesty a fous.

At church, you know, as well as at the play,
We cannot have a feat unless we pay:
And you and I, till some few pence are given,
Must like two spaniels from the pew be driven;
Nor gain one glimpse of glory, or of grace,
Ere first we buy the *freedom of the place*.
For all commodities a price is paid,
Why, then, refuse your money for a maid?

A wife, you say, destroys domestic ease,
You cannot then do just whate'er you please.
But tell me truly, when a fool is drunk,
And all his senses in the liquor sunk,
Shall he be suffer'd to disturb the streets,
And bruise with every vagabond he meets?
Embrace infection, founder in the mire,
Or, reeling homeward set his house on fire?
Far better fate attends the happy man
Who weds a mate as early as he can:
His faithful spouse his every wants attends
One spouse is worth ten thousand bottle-friends;
She flatters, strips, and rolls him into bed,
Then binds a fillet round his aching head;
She covers, carefully, each wearied limb,
For all her wishes centre but in him;
And, while coherently to curse he tries,
The briny shower comes bursting from her eyes.

In humble tone, she ventures to complain,
 He swore last night he ne'er would soak again;
 Reminds him that he plays a thoughtless part,
 And hints what agonies have wrung her heart.
 'Then which all other mortals would despise,
 Beside her hopeful husband down she lies.
 But lest his horrid breath may do her harm,
 She clings behind, to keep his shoulders warm.

A wife, besides, will bring you girls and boys;
 And though the monkeys make incessant noise,
 Though other children's din you cannot bear,
 Yet theirs, believe me, won't annoy your ear.
 None but an actual father ever knows
 With what fond joy a father's heart o'erflows,
 To see all Lilliput frisk up and down,
 When every look reminds him of his own,
 Or her's, who, in the summer days of youth,
 Taught him the charms of tenderness and truth.

And are you sick? 'Tis then her actions prove
 No words can paint the frenzy of her love:
 'Tis then the grandeur of her soul shines forth,
 Then first you learn the vastness of her worth.
 Your kindest comrades in attendance fail,
 For all must weary of a sick man's tale;
 But, night and day, she still is at your side,
 More soft, more charming far, than when a bride;
 For though corroding cares her bloom destroy,
 Her generous love excites superior joy:
 She watches every motion of your eye,
 Your every want impatient to supply.
 Affected smiles conceal her inward care,
 Hopeless herself, yet checking your despair;
 While oft, in spite of all her female art,
 A sigh escaping, cuts you to the heart.

How cold mere Friendship, when compar'd to this;
Without such women, what were human bliss.

And should, as it may happen, Fortune frown,
And from the height of greatness hurl you down,
When every friend, as usual, turns his back,
And your soul lingers on the mental rack;
When every insult must be coolly borne,
The pedant's pity, and the rival's scorn;
When those you trusted, their connections change,
And those who hate you, give resentment range;
When every look, where e'er you shew your head,
Is sure to make you feel "your kingdom's fled;"
When fordid Prudence stiffens every face,
And every tongue exults in your disgrace; *
At such a time, does female friendship fail?
No; she herself attends you to the jail.
Such friendship cheaply with a world were bought;
Her bosom just admits one single thought.
Your peace of mind she breathes but to pursue,
Nor dreads a dungeon to be shar'd with you.

She, too, when death arrives to your relief,
Shall watch its progress with the purest grief;
Perform each duty that distress can crave,
And, with fond tears bedew her husband's grave;
And still, with you, her tender mem'ry teems,
Still your lov'd image haunts her broken dreams,
And blasts each phantom of returning peace,
Till Heav'n, in pity, gives her own release.

Such are the sex we modestly despise,
And such the fools whom every fool decries.

* No passage, in any writer, can be more instructive or interesting, than the fall of the Duke of Sully, as described by himself.

To this you answer with a scornful smile,
 That common sense adopts a colder style;
 That many a wife turns out so very bad,
 As soon to drive the tameſt partner mad.
 The ſcrub, who bargains for a maſs of gold,
 May catch, no doubt, a flattern or a ſcold.
 The brute whoſe paſſion is but rank deſire,
 May feel ten days exhaust his carnal fire.
 The fool who marries for the ſake of wit,
 Is ſure to find himſelf ſeverely bit;
 And he who ſeeks a ſpouſe of noble blood,
 Muſt bear with patience, lectures long and loud.
 But men of ſenſe, with reaſon, hope to find
 A graceful perſon, with a modeſt mind;
 Whoſe various charms we ever muſt admire,
 At once the choiſe of wiſdom and deſire;
 And for mere merit, if you ſearch around,
 Believe me, that is always to be found.
 The ſureſt rules for chuſing ſuch a mate,
 Would furniſh topics for a fine debate;
 But, leſt the ſpirit of the verſe expire,
 Your preacher, for the preſent, ſhall retire.

FINIS.

